

The Adventure of Black Peter.

the crime was done upon the Wednes-

"On the Tuesday, Peter Carey was

when they heard him coming. Late ir

it was midday before anyone would

"Well, I have fairly steady nerves, as you know, Mr. Holmes, but I give

put my head into that little house

He had called it a cabin, and a cabir

it was, sure enough, for you would have thought that you were in a ship

There was a bunk at one end, a sea-

the Sea Unicorn, a line of logbooks of

a shelf, all exactly as one would ex-pect to find it in a captain's room. And there, in the middle of it, was the man himself—his face twisted like a lost

soul in torment, and his great brindled

beard stuck upwards in his agony. Right through his broad breast a steel

narpoon had been driven, and it had sunk deep into the wood of the wall

instant that he had uttered that last

"Meaning that you saw none?" "I assure you, sir, that there were

"My good Hopkins, I have investi-gated many crimes, but I have never

yet seen one which was committed by a flying creature. As long as the

a flying creature. As long as the criminal remains upon two legs so long

must there be some indentation, some abrasion, some trifling displacement

which can be detected by the scientific searcher. It is incredible that this blood-bespattered room contained no

trace which could have aided us. I understand, however, from the inquest

that there were some objects which

The young inspector winced at my

past praying for now. Yes, there were several objects in the room which called for special attention. One was

the harpoon with which the deed was committed. It had been snatched

down from a rack on the wall. Two others remained there, and there was a vacant place for the third. On the

stock was engraved 'Ss. Sen Unicorn. Dundee.' This reemed to establish

moment of fury, and that the murderer had seized the first weapon which came

dressed, suggested that he had an a cointment with the murderer, which borne out by the fact that a bottle of and two dirty glasses stood upon "Yes," said Holmes; "I think that

there any other spirit but rum in the

and it had therefore not been used. "For all that, its presence has some significance," said Holmes. "How-ever, let us hear some more about the

"What part of the table?"

objects which do seem to you to bear

'Yes, there was a tantalus containing brandy and whisky on the sea-chest. It is of no importance to us, however, since the decanters were full,

that the crime had been done

in his way. The fact that the was committed at 2 in the morning, and yet Peter Carey was fully

you failed to overlook?"

companion's ironical comments. "I was a fool not to call you in at the time, Mr. Holmes. However, that's

"I know your methods, sir, and I ap-

chest, maps and charts, a picture of

you my word that I got a shake

It was droning like a harmonium the flies and bluebottles, and the floor and walls were like a slaughter house.

one of his blackest moods, flushed

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HAVE never known my friend to be in better form, | > both, mental and physical, than in the year '95. His increasing fame had increasing fame had brought with it an im-mense practice, and I should be guilty of an in-

ents who crossed our humble threshold in Baker street. Holmes, however, like all great artists, lived for his art's sake, and, save in the case of the Duke of Holdernesse, I have seldom known him claim any large reward for his inhim claim any large reward for his in-estimable services. So unworldly was he—or so capricious—that he frequently refused his help to the powerful and wealthy, where the problem made no appeal to his sympathies, while he would devote weeks of most intense application to the affairs of some hum-ble client whose carse presented those ble client whose case presented those strange and dramatic qualities which ppealed to his imagination and chal-

In this memorable year '95, a curious and incongruous succession of cases had engaged his attention, ranging from his famous investigation of the Fudden death of Cardinal Tosca-an in quiry which was carried out by him at the express desire of His Holiness, the the express desire of His Holiness, the Pope-down to the arrest of Wilson, the notorious canary-trainer, which removed a plague-spot from the east end of London. Close on the heels of these two famous cases came the tragedy of Woodman's Lee, and the very obscure circumstances which surrounded the death of Captain Peter Carey. No record of the deings of Mr. Sherlock Holmes would be complete which did Holmes would be complete which did not include some account of this very unusual affair.

During the first week of July, my friend had been absent so often and so long from our lodging that I knew he had something on hand. The fact that several rough-looking men called during that time and inquired for Captain Basil made me understand that Holmes was working somewhere unde one of the numerous disguises and names with which he concealed his own formidible identity. He had at least five small refuges in different parts of London, in which he was able parts of London, in which he was able to change his personality. He said nothing of his business to me, and it was not my habit to force a conference. The first positive sign which he gave me of the direction which his investigation was taking was an extraordinary one. He had gone out before breakfast, and I had sat down to mine when he strode into the room, his hat upon his head and a huge barbed. upon his head and a huge barbed-headed spear tucked like an umbrella

"Good gracious, Holmes!" I cried.
"You don't mean to say that you have been walking about London with that I drove to the butcher's and back."

"The butcher's?"

And I return with an excellent appetite. There can be no question, my dear Watson, of the value of exercise before breakfast. But I am prepared to bet you that you will not guess the form that my exercise has taken." will not attempt it.

chuckled as he poured out the

by no exertion of my strength can I give us some short sketches of the estransfix the pig with a single blow.

Perhaps you would care to try?"

Stanley Hopkins drew a slip of paper

Because it seemed to me to have an addrect bearing upon the mystery of Woodman's Lee. Ah, Hopkins, I got your wire last night, and I have been expecting you. Come and join us." Our visitor was an exceedingly alert

We Watched Him . . . he returned with a large book.

Mr. Holmes. It's my first big chance, and I am at my wit's end. For goodness' sake, come down and lend me a

Well, well, it just happens that I have already read all the available evidence, including the report of the inquest, with some care. By the way, what do you make of that tobacco pouch, found on the scene of the crime?

"No doubt. I only mention it because, if I had been handling the case, I should have been inclined to make that a starting point of my investigation. However, my friend, Dr. Watson, shirt sleeves furiously stabbing at it with this weapon. I was that energetic person, and I have satisfied myself that by no exertion of my strength can I

for worlds. But why are you from his pocket.

"I have a few dates here which will give you the career of the dead man, Captain Peter Carey. He was born in '45—fifty years of age. He was a most daring and successful seal and whale fisher. In 1883 he commanded the steam sealer, Sea Unicorn, of Dundee. He had then had several successful voyman, thirty years of age, dressed in a quiet tweed suit, but retaining the erct bearing of one who was accustomed as official uniform. I recognized him at once as Stanley Hopkins, a young police inspector, for whose future Holmes had high hopes, while he in turn professed the admiration and respect of a pupil for the scientific meth-

ods of the famous amateur. Hopkins' brow was clouded, and he sat down with an air of deep dejection.

"No, thank you, sir. I breakfasted before I came round. I spent the night in town, for I came up yesterday to report."

"And what had you to report?"

"You have made no progress?"

"None."

"Dear me! I must have a look at the man was a perfect fiend. He has been known to drive his wife and daughter out of doors in the midth of the man was an intermittent drunkard, and when he had the fit on him he was a perfect fiend. He has been known to drive his wife and daughter out of doors in the middle of the night, and flog them through the park until the whole village outside the gates was aroused by their as he passed the grounds and looked at the square of light still shining is the square of light st side the gates was aroused by their Besides, this refers to the Monday

"He was summoned once for a savage assault upon the old vicar, who had called upon him to remonstrate with him upon his conduct. In short, Mr. Holmes, you would go far before you found a more dangerous man than Peter Carey, and I have heard that he hore the same character when he compouch, found on the scene of the crime? Is there no clue there?"
Hopkins looked surprised.
"It was the man's own pouch, sir. His initials were inside it. And it was of sealskin—and he was an old sealer."
"But he had no pipe."
"No, sir, we could find no pipe. Indeed, he smoked very little, and yet he might have kept some tobacco for his friends."
In eed not say that he was loathed and avoided by every one of his neighbors, and that I have not heard one single word of sorrow about his terrible end.

"No doubt. I only mention it be-"

"But he had no pipe."
"But he was known in the was known in the trade as Black Peter, and the name manded his ship. He was known in the trade as Black Peter, and the name manded his ship. He was known in the trade as Black Peter, and the name manded his ship. He was known in the trade as Black Peter, and the name manded his ship. He was known in the trade as Black Peter, and the name manded his ship. He was known in the trade as Black Peter, and the name manded his ship. He was known in the trade as Black Peter, and the name manded his ship. He was known in the trade as Black Peter, and the name man his terrible end.

"You must have read in the account of the inquest about the man's cabin, Mr. Holmes, but perhaps your friend here has not heard of it. He had built himself a wooden outhouse—he always called it the 'cabin'—a few hundred yards from his house, and it was here that he slept every night. It was a little, single roomed hut, sixteen feet by ten. He kept the key in his pocket, made his own bed, cleaned it himself, and allowed no other foot to cross the threshold. There are small windows on each side, which were covered by curtains and never opened. One of these windows was turned towards the nigh road, and when the light burned in it at night the folk used to point it out to each other and wonder what Black Peter was doing in there. That's

"You remember that a stonemason, named Slater, walking from Forest

"It lay in the middle. It was coarse sealskin—the straight-haired skin, with a leather thong to bind it. Inside was 'P. C.' on the flap. There was half an ounce of strong ship's to-"Excellent! What more? Stanley Hopkins drew from

et a drab covered note-The outside was rough worn, the leaves discoloured. On the first page were written the initials "J. H. N." and the date "1883." Holmes laid it on the table and examined it in his minute way, while Hop-kins and I gazed over each shoulder. On the second page were the printed letters "C. P. R.," and then came several sheets of numbers. Another heading was "Argentine," another "Costa Rica," and another "San Paulo," each with pages of signs and figures after it. What do you make of these?" asked

with drink and as savage as a danger-ous wild beast. He roamed about the house, and the women ran for it Holmes. "They appear to be lists of stock ex-

that I hold. You wil admit, Mr. Holmes, that there is a possibility that these initials are those of the second person who was present—in other words of the murderer. I would also urge that the introduction into the case of a document relating to large masses of valuable securities gives us for the first time some indication of a motive for the crime."

If we can come to closer quarters with the gentleman who has paid this visit in the night."

It was past 11 o'clock when we formed our little ambuscade. Hopkins was for leaving the door of the hut this would rouse the suspicions of the stranger. The lock was a perfectly simple out and only a strong blade was simple out and

this. Have you endeavored to trace any of the securities here mentioned?" the thrill which the hunter feel the thrill which the hunter feel the thrill which the hunter feel thrill which thrill which the hunter feel thrill which the hunter feel thrill which the hunter feel thrill which thrill w "Inquiries are now being made at the offices, but I fear that the complete register of the stockholders of these behind him. He was pinned like a beetle on a card. Of course, he was quite dead, and had been so from the South American concerns is in South America, and that some weeks mus elapse before we can trace the shares.' plied them. Before I permitted anything to be moved, I examined most carefully the ground outside, and also cover of the note-book with his magni-

"Surely there is some discoloration here," said he. "Yes, sir, it is a bloodstain. I told

you that I picked the book off the

'Was the bloodstain above or below?' 'On the side next the boards."
'Which proves, of course, that the ook was dropped after the crime was ommitted."

Exactly, Mr. Holmes. I appreciated that point, and I conjectured that it was dropped by the murderer in his hurried flight. It lay near the door." "I suppose that none of these securi-ies have been found among the property of the dead man?

'Have you any reason to suspect "No, sir. Nothing seemed to have been touched."
"Dear, me, it is certainly a very in-

teresting case. Then there was a knife, was there not?"
"A sheath-knife, still in its sheath. lay at the feet of the dead man. rs. Carey has identified it as being er husband's property.

Holmes was lost in thought for some "Well," said he, at last, "I suppose I Stanley Hopkins gave a cry of joy.

"Thank you sir. That will, indeed, be a weight off my mind." Holmes shook his flinger at the in-'It would have been an easier task a

week ago," said he. "But even now my visit may not be entirely fruitless. Watson, if you can spare the time, I should be very glad of your company. If you will call a four-wheeler, Hop-kins, we shall be ready to start for Forest Row in a quarter of an hour."
Alighting at the small wayside sta-

tion, we drove for some miles through the remains of widespread woods, which were once part of that great forest which for so long held the Saxon invaders at bay—the impenetrable "weald," for sixty years the bulwark of Britain. Vast sections of it have been cleared, for this is the seat of the first iron works of the country, and the trees have been felled to small the trees have been felled to smelt the ore Now the richer fields of the north have absorbed the trade, and nothing save "There was this tobacco pouch upon these ravaged groves and great scars in the table." Here, in a clearing upon the green slope

of terror in the depths of her redrimmed eyes, told of the years of hardship and ill-usage which she had endured. With her was her daughter, a pale, fair-haired girl, whose eyes blazed defiantly at us as she told us that she was glad that her father was dead, and that she blessed the hand which had struck him down. It was a terrible household that Black Peter Carey had made for himself, and it was Carey had made for himself, and it was with a sense of relief that we found ourselves in the sunlight again, and making our way along a path which had been worn across the fields by the feet of the dead man.

The outhouse was the simplest of drive.

There could be no doubt of the fact. The woodwork was cut, and the next instant the steady light from a candle filled the interior of the There could be no doubt of the lact.

The woodwork was cut, and the scratches showed white through the paint, as if they had been that instant done. Holmes had been examining the done. Holmes had been examining the

removed but the furniture within the little room still stood as it had been on the night of the crime. For two hours. "They appear to be lists of stock exchange securities. I thought that 'J. H. N.' were the initials of a broker, and that 'C. P. R.' may have been his client."

"Try Canadian Pacific railway," said Holmes.

Stanley Hopkins swore between his teeth, and struck his thigh with his clenched hand.

"What a fool I have been!" he cried.
"Of course, it is as you say. Then 'J."

little room still stood as it had been on the night of the crime. For two hours, with most intense concentration. Holmes examined every object in turn, but his face showed that his quest was not a successful one. Once only he paused in his patient investigation.
"Have you taken anything off this shelf, Hopkins?"

"No, I have moved nothing."
"Something has been taken. There is less dust in this corner of the shelf

clenched hand.

"What a fool I have been!" he cried.

"Of course, it is as you say. Then 'J.
H. N.' are the only initials we have to solve. I have already examined the old stock exchange lists, and I can find no one in 1883, either in the house or among the outside brokers, whose initials correspond with these. Yet I feel that the clue is the most important one that I hold. You wil admit. Mr. Holmes, that I here is a possibility that these

he crime."
Sherlock Holmes' face showed that he needed to push it back. Holmes also sherfock Holmes face showed that he was thoroughly taken aback by this new development.

"I must admit both your points." said the hut, but outside it among the bushes that this note-book, which did not appear at the inquest, and the waste our man if he struck a beginning to the struck of the st

of a hill, stood a long, low, stone house, approached by a curving drive running through the fields. Nearer the road, and surrounded on three sides by bushes, was a small outhouse, one window and the door facing in our direction. It was the scene of the murder.

Stanley Hopkins led us first to the house, where he introduced us to a haggard, gray-haired woman, the widow of the murdered man, whose gaunt and deep-lined face, with the furtive look of terror in the depths of her redrimmed eyes, told of the years of hard-

amongst the bushes, waiting for whatever might come. At first the steps of a few belated villagers, or the sound of voices from the village, lightened our vigil, but one by one these interpretation discovered ruptions died away and an absolute stillness fell upon us, save for the chimes of the distant church, which told us of the progress of the night, and for the rustle and whisper of a fine rain falling amid the foliage which coofed us in.

Half-past 2 had chimed, and it was

the darkest hour which precedes the dawn, when we all started as a low but sharp click came from the direction of The outhouse was the simplest of dwellings, wooden-walled, shingle-roofed, one window beside the door and one on the farther side. Stanley Hopkins drew the key from his pocket and had stooped to the lock, when he paused with a look of attention and surprise upon his face.

"Some one has the simplest of the gate. Someone had entered the drive. Again there was a long silence, and I shad begun to fear that it was a false alarm, when a stealthy step was heard upon the other side of the hut, and a moment later a metallic scraping and clinking. The man was trying to force the lock. This time his skill was greater or his face. stooped to the lock, when he paused ha a look of attention and surprise on his face.

Some one has been tampering with lie said.

"Some one has tried to force this also. Whoever it was has failed to make his way in. He must have been a very poor burglar."
"This is a most extraordinary thing." said the inspector, "I could swear that these marks were not here vesterable."

The noctural visitor was a young man, frail and thin, with a black mous fact, which intensified the deadly pallor of his face. He could not have been much above 20 years of age. I have never seen any human being who appeared to be in such a pitiable fright, for his teeth were visibly chattering. said the inspector, "I could swear that these marks were not here yesterday evening."

""Some curious person from the village nerhans" I suggested the properties of the prope "Some curious person from the Village, perhaps," I suggested.
"Very unlikely. Few of them would dare to set foot in the grounds, far less try to force their way into the cabin. What do you think of it, Mr. Holmes?"
"I think that fortune is very kind to use of the corners. He returned with a large book, one of the logbooks which formed a line upon the shelves." "You mean that the person will come ain?"
"It is very probable. He came to the leaves of this volume until he came to the entry which he sought." again?"

"It is very probable. He came expecting to find the door open. He tried to get in with the blade of a very small penknife. He could not manage it. What would he do?"

"Come again next night with a more useful tool."

"So I should say. It will be our fault if we are not there to receive him. Meanwhile, let me see the inside of the cabin."

The traces of the tragedy had been removed but the furniture within the little room still stood as it had been on

lessly from one of us to the other.

"Now, my fine fellow." said Stanley Hopkins, "who are you, and what do you want here?"

The man pulled himself together, and faced us with an effort at self-composure.

"You are detectives, I suppose?" said he, "You imagine I am connected with the death of Captain Peter Carey. I

"We'll see about that," said Hopkins. "First of all, what is your name?" "It is John Hopley Neligan."

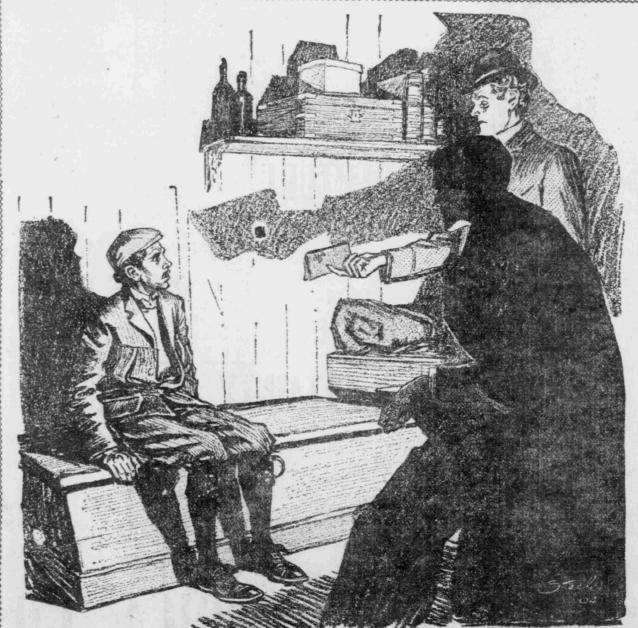
Why should I tell you?" "If you have no answer, it may go

The young man winced.
"Well, I will tell you," he said. "Why hould I not? And yet I hate to think hould I not? And yet I hate to think this old scandal gaining a new lease life. Did you ever heard of Daw-on and Neligan?" I could see from Hopkins' face that

he never had, but Holmes was keenly

"You mean the West county bank-ers," said he. "They failed for a mil-lion, ruined half the county families of Cornwall, and Neligan disappeared." "Exactly. Neligan was my father."

As last we were getting something positive, and yet it seemed a long gap between an absconding banker and Capand yet brought with it something of between an absconding banker and Cap-the thrill which the hunter feels when tain Peter Carey pinned against the



"Then how do you account for that?"

